

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9917
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 00810

FOR EMBASSY CAPE TOWN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SF, AO
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ANGOLA

REF: (A) STATE 049666, (B) USUN 716

1. ADRIAAN EKSTEEN, CHARGE OF SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS, PROVIDED AMBASSADOR MCHENRY MARCH 7 WITH ANSWERS TO THREE QUESTIONS WHICH MCHENRY HAD PREVIOUSLY POSED IN RESPONSE TO SOUTH AFRICAN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE CONCERNING EIGHT SOUTH AFRICAN SOLDIERS HELD IN ANGOLA. AMB MCHENRY, ACTING ON BEHALF OF CONTACT GROUP, HAD RAISED THE QUESTIONS MARCH 1 WITH EKSTEEN (REF B) WHO HAD REPLIED THAT HE WOULD REFER THEM TO HIS GOVERNMENT.

2. FOLLOWING ARE QUESTIONS AND SOUTH AFRICAN RESPONSES:

- Q. HAVE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD ANY PREVIOUS CONTACT
 - WITH ANGOLAN AUTHORITIES REGARDING SOUTH AFRICANS
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- HELD PRISONER?
- A. BOTH OFFICIALLY AND UNOFFICIALLY SOUTH AFRICANS
- HAVE HAD CONTACT WITH ANGOLANS ON THIS MATTER.
- (EKSTEEN NOTED SOUTH AFRICAN DESIRE THAT THIS
- INFORMATION BE HANDLED DISCRETELY.)

- Q. ARE THE SOUTH AFRICANS CURRENTLY HOLDING ANY
- ANGOLAN OR CUBAN PRISONERS WHOSE STATUS THE
- ANGOLANS MIGHT RAISE? IF SO, WOULD SOUTH AFRICA
- CONSIDER AN EXCHANGE?

- A. YES, SOUTH AFRICANS ARE PRESENTLY HOLDING PRI-
- SONER NINE ANGOLANS (ONE "COMMISSAR" AND EIGHT
- "MILITIA") AND 3 CUBANS. SOUTH AFRICA IS
- WILLING TO CONSIDER EXCHANGE.

- Q. WOULD THE SOUTH AFRICANS WELCOME ICRC INVOL-
- VEMENT IN THIS CASE IF THE ANGOLANS WERE
- AGREEABLE?

- A. ICRC WAS GIVEN ACCESS TO CUBANS HELD BY SOUTH
- AFRICA AND REPORTED FAVORABLY ON THEIR TREAT-
- MENT. SOUTH AFRICA WOULD WELCOME GREATER
- ICRC INVOLVEMENT.

3. MCHENRY HAS REPORTED THIS INFORMATION TO THE
CONTACT GROUP WHICH WILL CONSIDER SHORTLY WHAT
ACTION THE GROUP MIGHT TAKE. YOUNG

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